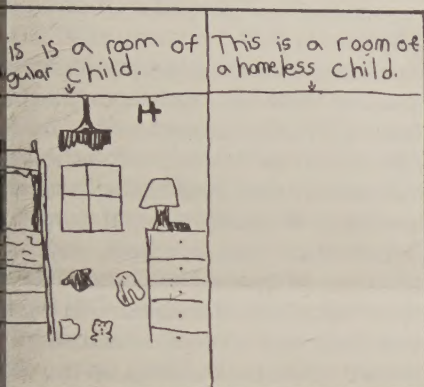


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Newsletter of the United Church of Christ

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Work by children is a recommended activity in support of the all-church Neighborhood in Need Offering, suggested for Oct. 7. Programs to be helped concern American Indian ministries, poverty and homelessness, and confronting prejudice and hate.

UCC Boards Discuss Looking Into Insurance Consolidation

Board for Homeland Ministries and Conferences of the UCC Insurance Advisory Board held an exploratory meeting recently to discuss whether they could consider consolidating the various types of insurance now offered by the two UCC agencies.

Currently, the Homeland Board handles property insurance for some local churches as well as for the UCC-related predominantly black colleges and universities and property insurance for national agencies. The Insurance Advisory Board handles property insurance for about half the UCC's 6,400 churches.

Impetus for the boards to meet was the possibility that premiums might be lower in a consolidated operation. Additional savings could occur if the whole church were involved—including UCC-related educational and health and welfare institutions.

The meeting was convened by UCC President Paul H. Sherry. Participants agreed to hold another session in October to invite the Pension Boards, which administer the denomination's self-insured health plan.

President Asks: Save Time in Fall to Discuss UCC Planning

UCC president Paul H. Sherry is asking local pastors to set aside special discussion time in their churches' fall and spring calendars. He hopes parishioners from every congregation will review and comment on first drafts of documents emerging from *Toward the 21st Century: A System-Wide Planning Process for the UCC*.

Proposed by Dr. Sherry and backed by the Executive Council, conference ministers, instrumentality executives and other UCC bodies, the process aims to identify major issues facing the church and suggest systematic ways it can approach them.

The process names nine areas of concentration: theological reflection, mission theme, justice commitments, leadership concerns, financial development, membership issues, communication, mutual support of conferences, and denominational services to pastors, lay leaders and churches.

Dr. Sherry is appointing nine teams of 12, with laity and local pastors forming a majority. Each team will take one area and write a two- to three-page "directional statement" about where the UCC could head in coming years. First drafts of the statements will be mailed churchwide in Oct. or Nov. (See Sept. *UC News* for date.)

"This process can't work without the help of local pastors and churches," Dr. Sherry says. "I hope pastors will hand out the texts to church members and set aside one or two discussion sessions during adult education classes, coffee hours, consistory meetings, women's or men's groups—any forum that is appropriate."

Responses will go to the teams for use in revising the statements. Second drafts will be mailed churchwide, probably in Mar. or Apr. 1991, for another round of comments before the proposed statements go to General Synod 18. Synod is largely being structured around the planning process, in hopes that delegates will refine and approve directional statements and next steps in the continuing process.

For a copy of the overall outline of *Toward the 21st Century*, contact Office of the President, UCC, 700 Prospect Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115, 216-736-2101.

UCC-DISCIPLES PARTNERSHIP Ministerial Recognition Ideas Get Tested

The UCC Office for Church Life and Leadership and its Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) counterpart have developed a study paper outlining possibilities for changes in the way ministers are called from the other denomination.

In June, OCLL sent the paper entitled *The Mutual Recognition and Reconciliation of Ordained Ministries* to all association committees on the ministry to start discussion within the UCC. The study guide was developed in response to the 1989 General Synod and General Assembly votes that the churches are in "full communion" with each other.

Among the options for change the paper describes are granting UCC and Disciples pastors standing in both churches,

permitting pastors to change their standing when they serve churches in the other denomination, or authorizing each denomination to create a new category of "associated" standing for the clergy of its partner church.

No such changes will occur for several years, says Thomas Tupper, OCLL executive associate. His office will use the feedback on the study paper to report to General Synod 18 in 1991 and to possibly bring recommendations for change before General Synod 19. Pastors' comments are welcome, he says.

Copies of the paper are available from OCLL, UCC, 700 Prospect Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115, 216-736-2132. Send comments there by Nov. 10.

WHAT'S INSIDE:

World Board Takes on New Mission Emphasis, page 3

Enrollment of UCC Seminarians Declines, page 3

Alternatives to Columbus Day Celebrations Planned By UCC Groups, page 4

Commission for Racial Justice Urges EPA Toxic Waste Study, page 4

'Discerning the Body'

By Robert O. Inglis

Theological work, among other things, is an important means of socialization into Christ and Christ's body, the church. Hence Paul never tired of restating the basics of his theology and applying them to every life situation.

What I want to do in this brief writing, then, is to underscore something that we all "know," but are slow to integrate and internalize; namely, our quest for "wholeness."

To be sure, the word "whole" has become widely used in our vocabulary, especially its derivative, "holistic." It has been such a breath of fresh air to see life through this lens, which seeks out the unity and relationship of things, rather than focusing so much on the separateness of things.

No longer shall mind, emotion, body and spirit be held apart. No longer can nations and cultures be kept separate in a "them vs. us" form of interpretation. No longer can we remain comfortably isolated from our larger environment, treating the world and universe as an object of our desire and possession.

Slowly, often painfully and haltingly, we are beginning to "discern the body" (to borrow from Paul). Our socialization is in process, even if it is not complete.

A microcosm of this has to do with the way we discern our human bodies. We are certainly interested in our bodies; one might say vitally interested in them. We are interested in their health, their appearance, their completeness, their capabilities, etc. We entertain many fantasies about them. We spend a great deal to preserve and enhance them. We grieve deeply any significant loss to our bodies.

We try to create a place for "disability" in our interpretation of our humanness, but find it hard to do. We are deeply socialized into the view that disability by definition means lack of wholeness. Thus we try to compensate for the tragedy with such "unwholeness."

The problem lies not in our attempts to help ourselves and one another, but in the subtle judgment such efforts reinforce that anyone not matching the ideal body, mind, emotions, etc., is "not quite right." Our brave faces and pretenses don't change this fact.

If this be so, what, if anything, can Christian theology do to help us? Can it help "resocialize" us? And, if so, how?

I think it is meant to help.

First, in a world of expanding horizons and possibilities, we need a theological word about limits that embraces "disability."

Second, we need a stronger, oft-repeated word about the interrelatedness—even the interdependence—of all things.

Third, as Christians, we believe that both at the hand and in the eyes of God, we are whole! We believe that if anyone is a Christian, that one is a new creation. That is, whole. And, at the same time, no one is whole in isolation from others. We are whole as we discover ourselves a part of and share in the body of Christ, symbolized and from time to time actualized in the church. In that body, all are gifted for building up the whole.

Let us remember and continue to be surprised that while limits us not only does not limit God, but may even be a prerequisite for being useful to God. For God has always chosen what is "weak" (limited) to accomplish God's purposes of justice and love.

Robert O. Inglis is minister of the United Church of Christ in Vermillion, SD.

Priorities Report

Integrity of Creation, Justice & Peace

Waterbury Congregational Church, UCC, VT, celebrated "Earth Day" teaching about the environment. After worship, members went to "environmental learning centers" in the church and heard presentations on global warming, water conservation, rain forests, recycling, tree planting and ozone depletion.

Evangelism & Membership Growth

Three times a year, *Old First Reformed Church*, Philadelphia, sponsors "Bring a Friend to Church Sunday." Preparation includes training of church members to understand who they are as evangelists. Friends brought to church are welcomed and follow-up calls invite them back.

Education

The *Maine Conference's division of Christian education* sponsored human sexuality workshops to train church leaders to conduct classes in their churches for junior high youth and their parents. Leaders believe the classes are preventative because when youth become high school age, they will be able to make better value choices about their sexuality and behavior.

The Homeless Poor

The senior high group at *Woodside Church*, Flint, MI, challenged adult church members to work two hours for each youth hour spent restoring houses for low-income families. The youth worked 36 hours and the adults 74.

JOB OPPORTUNITY

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR is sought by Office for Church in Society to work out of Cleveland. Apply by Sept. 15 to D. Yvonne Marrow, OCIS Search Committee, c/o Office of UCC President, 700 Prospect Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115. Call 919-743-1205 with questions.

CORRECTION

The Office for Church Life and Leadership's new Middle Atlantic region associate is Felix Carrion, not Carilon.

OPPOSING VIEWS

Mar.-Apr. *KYP's* clergy salary article drew responses from pastors HENRY K. YORDON of First Congregational Church, UCC, Norwalk, CT, and JOHN TSCHUDY of Immanuel-Zion UCC, Greenwood, WA.

Mr. Yordon says his church has sent out three (soon four) ordained ministers age 35-55, each serving for less than the recommended minimum and well below the lowest conference average. *While you may call it pay, he says, some of us continue to call it 'ministerial support' and do not expect a whole lot of it.*

Mr. Tschudy sees equitable salaries as a justice issue. Pointing to income gaps, he says: *Each church needs to ask itself: How could we help another church have a full-time pastor by being a better steward in our own church? Each pastor needs to ask, if I were willing to get by on a little less, might I be able to help another church have a full-time pastor?*

PERSONNEL CHANGES

M. DOUGLAS BORKO of the Penn West Conference is the new associate for the stewardship program with the Stewardship Council. He will begin work in Cleveland in Sept.

DOROTHY LESTER has been elected associate for media with the Office for Church Life and Leadership. She will start in Oct., working out of Cleveland.

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World Bd Explores New Focus

The emerging way of acting out the UCC's long-held commitment to "partnerships" overseas will become newly visible in 1991, when UC Board for World Ministries is moving staff positions from New York City to the UCC's Cleveland offices. The emerging trend, known informally as "world ministries in the U.S.," was among the agenda items at the Apr. meeting of the UCBWM board of directors. It involves such work as receiving missionaries to the U.S. from other countries, mission education and interpretation here, advocacy on U.S. government policies, short-term mission appointments of American volunteers and recruitment of racial and ethnic people for world ministries.

UCBWM executive vice president Scott S. Libbey stresses two things about this cluster of programs that emphasize U.S. Christians' involvement in world ministry: they are neither brand new nor are they a replacement for other kinds of world ministry. For example, UCBWM has been bringing overseas partners to the U.S. as missionaries for more than a decade. And UCBWM will continue to send missionaries overseas at the request of indigenous churches and ecumenical groups.

What is new is the coming move to Cleveland of seven UCBWM program staff positions that concentrate on U.S.-based ministry. Mr. Libbey says it will help UCBWM to identify these as a unit—one that is increasingly important in the eyes of many UCC congregations and overseas partners.

"Many UCC churches welcome more direct involvement in world ministry," Mr. Libbey says, "and many of our partners say one of the best things we can do is influence U.S. behaviors that affect the rest of the world. We'll explore, in coming months how we can strengthen this type of ministry." He says UCBWM is analyzing its budget to see if trends in overseas personnel funding, such as increasing volunteerism and joint ecumenical sponsorships, could free up some such funds.

In another matter at the Apr. meeting, the UCBWM board voted to explore combining itself for program purposes with its counterpart in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), possibly as early as 1993.

Investment Committee Prepares Information for Conference Treasurers

The UCC Divestment Implementation Committee has prepared a memo for conference treasurers to help them assess the banks they use in light of UCC divestment criteria. The memo asks them to work for changes in policies of banks not meeting the criteria or to refer to the criteria when selecting a bank.

Committee members voted to send a recommendation to the Executive Council that UCC divestment policies directed toward Namibia be dropped in light of that country's recent independence.

A resource packet on South Africa sanctions and divestment is available from the UC Board for World Ministries' World Issues Office, 475 Riverside Dr., 16th fl., New York, NY 10115, 212-870-2186.

UC Scene

Office hour was moved outside one Sunday at DESERT VIEW UCC, El Paso, TX, for a farmers' market sponsored by the Sunday School. Money raised went to the Great Hour of Sharing to help poor people in the Dominican Republic. One class wanted to buy seed, another fabric, a third pencils and notebooks, and a fourth to help finance a water buffalo.

UCC Seminarian Enrollment Decreases

UCC seminary enrollment is down, with the number of M. Div. students from the denomination at its lowest level since the 1979-1980 academic year.

In its annual survey of UCC students at Association of Theological Schools seminaries, the Office for Church Life and Leadership found total enrollment had decreased by nearly 5% from 1,132 in 1989 to 1,078 in 1990. Enrollment of M. Div. students declined by more than 7% from 707 to 655. The number of UCC M. Div. students at the denomination's seven closely-related seminaries (which enroll more than 52% of UCC M. Div. students) decreased by nearly 7% from 369 to 344.

Though women M. Div. students declined by some 6%, they compose more than 56% of all UCC M. Div. students. Racial/ethnic people make up nearly 12% of all UCC M. Div. students, a decline of over 1% from last year's all-time high of 13%.

Why has the decline occurred? According to William Baumgaertner of the Association of Theological Schools, "the profession of ministry is not as respected as it used to be. And the values associated with parish ministry are considered less important by today's society than in the past. Thus, more people are choosing other careers and fewer students are attending seminaries."

In other seminary-related matters, the Lilly Foundation has given OCLL and the UCC closely-related seminaries a \$325,000 grant to go from July 1990-June 1993 to do work around the question of recruitment of seminarians.

SEND NEWS stories, PHOTOS and OPPOSING VIEWS of 100 words or less to stands taken in a particular article to KYP, Office of Communication, United Church of Christ, 475 Riverside Drive, Room 852, New York, NY 10115.

Missouri Elects Engel Minister

Kansas-Oklahoma Conference minister A. Gayle Engel was overwhelmingly elected conference minister of the Missouri Conference at its May annual meeting. He will assume his new duties Oct. 16.



Before joining Kansas-Oklahoma's staff in 1979, Mr. Engel served earlier as associate conference minister of the Southwest and Northern California Conferences. He has pastored several Missouri churches.

Rueben Koehler retired as Missouri Conference minister in Sept.

RECOMMENDED

Harper's Encyclopedia of Religious Education, a 717-page book edited by Iris and Kendig Cully, contains short articles by 270 authors. Includes simple explanations of topics from "Action-Reflection" to "Zwingli" and suggestions for using this information in teaching religious education. \$29.95 prepaid plus state tax from J.B. Lippincott, Rt. 3, Box 20B, Downsville Pike, Hagerstown, MD 21740, 800-638-3030 or 301-824-7300.

UPCOMING EVENTS

The **10th National Gathering of UC Coalition for Lesbian/Gay Concerns** is set for **July 10-14** in Los Angeles. Get information at 614-593-7301.

Craigville Theological Colloquy VII at Cape Cod, MA is **July 16-20**. Call Richard Eggers at 508-775-1265.

Elmhurst College, IL will hold a **conference for pastors on poverty July 30-Aug. 1**. Call Paul Parker, 708-617-3559.

OBITUARY

MILTON L. UPTON, 64, UC Board for Homeland Ministries secretary of urban missions from 1969 to 1980, died following a stroke May 21 in Montclair, NJ. He was pastor of Beecher Memorial Church, New Orleans, from 1958-1969.

News Briefs

Nominations Open for UCC Secretary

The General Synod 18 Nominating Committee is looking for new candidates for UCC secretary. Carol Joyce Brun has told the committee that she does not seek reelection. Get job description and full application procedures by contacting chairperson James C. Bowley, GS 18 Nominating Committee, UCC, 700 Prospect Ave., Cleveland, OH 44115, 216-736-2107. Applications or nominations (including resumes and, if clergy, ministerial profiles) should be sent to Mr. Bowley by Nov. 15.

Mission Boards Offer to Be Guarantors for HQ Bonds

Three-way conversations among the UCC Executive Council and UC Boards for Homeland and World Ministries have resulted in a plan whereby UCBHM and UCBWM would serve as guarantors for loans to be issued for the UCC to cover all costs of the headquarters relocation to Cleveland from New York City. The plan, which must be approved by the EC in the fall, is expected to yield considerable savings over the next 30 years in what is commonly called "rent."

Hymnal Survey to Start This Summer

At the request of the new UCC hymnal committee, UC Board for Homeland Ministries this month will begin surveying churches to find out what hymns and worship aids they use. UCBHM's research office will send surveys to 1/12 of the UCC churches every month, surveying all 6,400 within a year.

False O'Hair Petitions, Procter & Gamble Rumors Resurface

Rumors are again circulating that Madalyn Murray O'Hair has filed a petition (allegedly #2493) asking the Federal Communications Commission to ban religious programming from radio and television broadcasting. These rumors are not true, reports Eugene Schneider of the UCC Office of Communication, who says that Ms. O'Hair never has filed such a petition with the FCC.

Another wasted effort, he adds, is a petition to President Bush in the name of Ms. O'Hair's converted son William Murray, asking that the Attorney General be directed to reopen the Supreme Court case that outlawed prayer and Bible reading in the public schools. According to a National Council of Churches expert, even if Mr. Murray now states the suit was not brought by Ms. O'Hair "in his best interest," the Attorney General cannot reopen the case nor will the Supreme Court reconsider it.

Rumors also are being spread that the trademark of The Procter & Gamble Company is a symbol of "devil worship" and that a company executive discussed "satanism" on two television talk shows. The Procter & Gamble Company and the TV shows cited have documented that this rumor is untrue.

Churches Invited to Observe AIDS Awareness Month

The UCC AIDS/HIV Network is offering a resource packet with educational and worship materials to help churches participate Oct. in "National AIDS Awareness Month." Packets are \$7.50 from AIDS Program, UC Board for Homeland Ministries, 475 Riverside Dr., 10 Fl., New York, NY 10115, 212-870-3514 or 212-870-3438.

Columbus Hoopla Gets UCC Reaction

UC Board for Homeland Ministries announced at its recent board of directors meeting in Seattle that it would work with American Indian groups to plan alternative celebrations for 1992 to counter the 500th anniversary of the "discovery" of America by Christopher Columbus.

The Board noted that since Columbus's arrival, Indians have been systematically deprived of their rights and property.

UCBHM will work with the Council for American Indian Ministry and North and South Dakota Conferences. Contact Alfonso Roman, UCBHM American Missionary Association, 475 Riverside Dr., 10 Fl., New York, NY 10115, 212-870-3429.

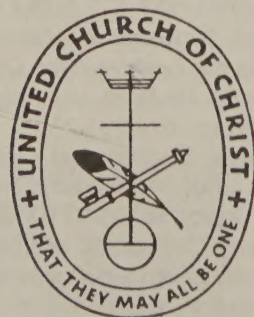
Both UCBHM and the UCC Commission for Racial Justice, at its spring meeting, have voiced strong support for Native American treaty rights.

Racial Justice Commission Urges Environment Study

The Environmental Protection Agency should study the impact of toxic waste on racial/ethnic communities, according to the UCC Commission for Racial Justice.

Meeting Apr. in Cleveland, CRJ's commissioners urged the U.S. Senate to support a bill--already passed by the House--seeking to elevate the EPA to cabinet-level status. The proposal that the EPA ask the National Academy of Sciences to do research on pollution and racial/ethnic people is in an amendment.

In other matters, the commissioners called on the Senate to pass the Racial Justice Act forbidding "use of the death penalty in a racially discriminatory pattern." They also endorsed the Americans With Disabilities Act, expected to be enacted into law by press time.



Logo of the UCC's Council for American Indian Ministry, which celebrates its 20th anniversary this year. CA churches will use American Sunday, Sept. 23, to learn more and commit themselves in cooperation with American Indian churches.

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